



CITY OF NORWALK  
**Harry W. Rilling**

*Mayor*

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**Chairwoman Cohen, Co-Chair Lemar and distinguished of the Transportation Committee:**

My name is Harry Rilling and I'm proud to be the Mayor of the City of Norwalk.

I am submitting testimony to you today, along with my Director of the Transportation, Mobility, and Parking Department, James Travers. We respectfully request your support for SB 630, An Act Concerning the Norwalk Transit District.

As the sixth largest city in Connecticut, Norwalk is the State's second fastest-growing municipality. In order to effectively and efficiently meet the challenges of a growing City, we need to rely more heavily on multi-modal transportation options that allow and encourage our residents and visitors to reach their destinations in other ways besides single occupancy vehicles.

To begin, we rely on bus transit not only to provide a first-mile and last-mile connection for many residents but to fully offer them a reliable transit service that gets them to and from their destination in an easy and timely manner. However, this has not been the case of our Norwalk Transit District. To give you a sense of the challenges, it has been decades since the Norwalk Transit District has reevaluated routes or taken the means necessary to understand the needs of their ridership. They do not measure or take action on their boardings or alightings, and their current routes do not provide access to many parts of our city.

Enabling the City of Norwalk to merge our independent bus service with Connecticut Transit would position Norwalk to capitalize on the experience of a much larger mass transit provider. It would serve far more residents in our community. This opportunity would provide a seamless transition for Norwalk residents to better access employment, education, healthcare and general destination opportunities outside our city.

Most recently, I stood with students from Norwalk Community College, now Connecticut Community College, to demand the bus service return to the school. The elimination of this vital route was dissolved without notice and served as another example of how the Norwalk Transit District failed to meet their riders' needs.

Placing the operations of our bus ridership into the larger mix of Connecticut Transit will serve as a critical tool in helping Norwalk provide better mass transit options that are fully connected to our region and better supported under a larger governing structure.

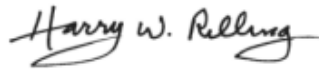
We understand the concerns you may have in supporting such as significant change. However, we believe that beyond the support of paratransit and micro transit, the more traditional routes would be best supported by a larger entity. The Norwalk Transit District would also be better positioned to support more specialized needs. We believe now is the time to enhance our transportation options. It is time for our bus transit system to firmly establish itself as an entity that supports our citizens by connecting housing to jobs and people to their community. We need a safe and efficient transportation system that supports our resident's quality of life and enhances economic opportunities for everyone.

Thank you for your time today.

Sincerely,

Harry W. Rilling

Mayor

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harry W. Rilling". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the printed name.

Harry W. Relling